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Montana

Chapter 1 State Plan

for

Program Improvement

Nancy Keenan, Superintendent
Office of Public Instruction
State Capitol
Helena, Montana 59620

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MONTANA
ESEA CHAPTER 1
PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN
(PIP)

BACKGROUND

Chapter 1 of Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by Public Law 100-297, states that for any school that does not:

> "...show substantial progress toward meeting the desired outcomes... or shows no improvement or a decline in aggregate performance of children served... the local education agency shall...develop and implement in coordination with such school a plan for program improvement... ."

This plan must be submitted to the local school board and the State Education Agency (SEA) and be made available to parents of Chapter 1 participants. If, after one year of full implementation, students continue to show no improvement, the Local Education Agency (LEA) and the SEA, in consultation with school staff and parents of participating children, shall develop and implement a joint improvement plan in the identified school. This collaborative effort will continue until improved performance is sustained for more than one year.

Public Law 100-297 further states that the SEA shall develop a state educational program improvement plan which contains:

I. the objective measures and standards that will be used to assess aggregate performance and substantial progress toward meeting desired outcomes;

II. the means the SEA will use to develop joint plans with LEAs in order for the identified schools to attain satisfactory student progress;

III. the timetable for developing and implementing improvement plans; and

IV. the assistance that will be provided to the identified schools in need.

In accordance with Sections 1020 and 1451 of Chapter 1 of the Act, the Montana Office of Public Instruction Program Improvement Plan has been developed in consultation with a Committee of Practitioners. The committee included administrators, teachers, parents, private school representatives and members of local boards of education. A majority of the committee members are representatives of LEAs.

PURPOSE

The intent of the Montana Office of Public Instruction Chapter 1 staff is to enable Montana school districts to provide Chapter 1 services that are of the highest standard. To accomplish this the comprehensive program improvement plan is to be implemented according to an identified time schedule. This plan establishes a structure for identifying schools in need of improvement and a process for determining program strengths and concerns. The program improvement plan is designed with a belief that all children should receive services that provide them with an opportunity to participate in a Chapter 1 program that will improve academic achievement, is enjoyable and appropriate for their educational level.

The Montana ESEA Chapter 1 Program Improvement Plan is designed to assist schools in program effectiveness efforts. The development of this plan began with input from local educators and parents through the statewide Chapter 1 Committee of Practitioners; the plan was refined in consultation with this committee. This plan is designed to meet the letter and intent of the Chapter 1 program effectiveness requirements specified in Section 1020 of Public Law 100-297 by setting the measures and standards that will be used to assess the effectiveness of Montana's Chapter 1 programs and to provide a program improvement framework for each school identified as needing improvement. This plan is intended to assist the Montana SEA and LEAs in achieving their common goal of providing quality services for Chapter 1 students and meeting the purposes stated in the Chapter 1 law.

I

OBJECTIVE MEASURES AND STANDARDS FOR LEA ANNUAL REVIEW

As required by Section 200.38 of the ESEA Chapter 1 regulations (Federal Register, May 19, 1989), an LEA shall conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of its Chapter 1 project in improving student performance as measured by aggregate performance and the desired outcomes described in the LEA's application.

MONTANA STANDARDS IN AGGREGATE PERFORMANCE

A school building will be identified for program improvement if the following condition exists:

- a zero or negative Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) gain aggregated across grade levels (excluding K-1) in one or more subject areas.

MONTANA STANDARDS FOR DESIRED OUTCOMES

A school building will also be identified for program improvement if the school does not show substantial progress toward meeting the desired outcomes described in the LEA's Chapter 1 application. An LEA may elect to measure substantial progress toward meeting the desired outcomes in one of two ways:

OPTION A: Each LEA specifies as part of its Chapter 1 application what will constitute "substantial progress" toward each of the desired outcomes stated in its application. With SEA approval of the Chapter 1 application, this LEA criteria becomes the standard against which the progress of its individual schools will be measured. Failure to meet the LEA-determined criteria indicates a need for program improvement in a school.

OPTION B: An LEA may choose to apply the SEA standard described below for measuring substantial progress. If an LEA does not specify reasonable criteria for measuring substantial progress, the SEA standard will be applied. Substantial progress is defined by the SEA as:

- more than 50 percent of students achieving each outcome.

Failure to achieve substantial progress toward meeting desired outcomes indicates a need for program improvement in a school.

DESIRED OUTCOMES
(Background Information)

ESEA Chapter 1 Regulations, Section 200.6: What definitions apply to the Chapter 1 LEA program?

"Desired outcomes"--

1. Means an LEA's goals to improve the educational opportunities of educationally deprived children to help those children--
   a. Succeed in the regular educational program of the LEA; and
   b. Improve achievement in basic and more advanced skills.

2. At a minimum, must be expressed in terms of aggregate performance in accordance with Section 200.38(b)(1)(iii).

3. May also be expressed in terms of other indicators such as--
   a. Improved student performance measured by criterion-referenced tests;
   b. Lower dropout rates;
   c. Improved attendance; and
   d. Fewer retentions in grades.

ESEA Chapter 1 Regulations, Appendix---Analysis of Comments and Changes Section 200.38: What are an LEA's responsibilities for program improvement?

Comment: One commenter suggested that the regulations clarify that an LEA may select as its desired outcomes the same objectives as identified to assess aggregate performance. Another commenter expressed concern that the need for program improvement not be based solely on one test score and suggested that there be other determining factors.

Discussion: Under Section 1012(b) of the Act, an LEA must include desired outcomes in its application. These desired outcomes may be expressed in terms of such indicators as lower dropout rates, improved student performance measured by criterion-referenced tests, improved attendance, fewer retentions in grade, and improved aggregate performance. At a minimum, an LEA's desired outcomes must be expressed in terms of aggregate performance in accordance with Section 200.38(b)(1)(ii). Thus, subject to any overall standard established in the state's plan, the LEA may use the standards for aggregate in Section 1021(b) or that measured by other indicators such as those described above in order to achieve a more complete picture of the success of the Chapter 1 program.

Comment: One commenter asked whether desired outcomes had to be written in numerical terms.

Discussion: Desired outcomes must be expressed in terms that can be measured. However, they do not have to be expressed in terms of norm-referenced tests, unless the only desired outcomes an LEA establishes are those relating to aggregate performance.

DESIRED OUTCOMES IN MONTANA

Desired outcomes describe an LEA's expectations for the Chapter 1 program. These outcomes are specific to important goals in content areas served by the program and communicate expectations for the attainments in those content areas. Desired outcomes are program-wide or building specific; all schools with the LEA work individually and collectively to achieve these outcomes.

Each desired outcome is objective and can be quantified and measured according to a timeline set by the LEA. The local needs assessment data and input from LEA staff (e.g., teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals) and parents of Chapter 1 students help focus and determine an LEA's desired outcomes.

All Chapter 1 programs, kindergarten through grade 12, write desired outcomes. Every grade level served in the Chapter 1 program is covered by one or more desired outcomes. However, desired outcomes are not necessarily separate by grade level. If appropriate, several or all grade levels may be covered by the same desired outcome.

Desired outcomes are included in the LEA's Chapter 1 application and are a basis for evaluating the LEA's Chapter 1 program.

II

MEANS TO DEVELOP JOINT PLANS

The program improvement assistance to be provided to a school identified under Section 200.38(b)(6), may include but is not limited to the following:

SEA Chapter 1 specialist assigned to each school to monitor and assist as needed, contacting each identified school to check on program improvement plans.

Curriculum and instructional workshops for teachers, parents and building administrative staff from identified LEAs.

Program improvement workshops designed to guide school committees in the program improvement process.

Facilitation for the LEA to secure needed assistance from staff of the Office of Public Instruction, RMC Research Corporation, Northwest Regional Education Laboratory (if rural LEA), colleges, universities and other appropriate sources.

Cadre of Montana educators who will act as a resource to schools

- mentoring
- providing field consultation assistance
- networking of resources.

III

MONTANA TIMELINE

TIMELINE FOR THOSE SCHOOLS THAT HAVE BEEN INITIALLY IDENTIFIED

July 1	LEA submits evaluation reports to SEA. Within evaluation report, LEAs identify buildings for program improvement.
September 30	SEA verifies buildings eligible for program improvement. SEA verbally confirms program improvement identifications with LEA.
Fall	Instructional conference held. Program improvement assistance provided at conference.
Winter	Regional or statewide meetings for LEAs participating in program improvement. A minimum of two persons must attend - a building administrator and a Chapter 1 instructor. If the building administrator or the Chapter 1 instructor cannot attend the program improvement meeting, the SEA must approve who will attend.
Spring	Participating LEAs are required to attend the annual SEA spring workshop.
By August 1	LEA presents Program Improvement Plan to local school board (may occur earlier).
By August 1	LEA submits Program Improvement Plan to SEA with Chapter 1 application for the next school year. (May also be submitted in advance of application.)
Ongoing	LEA involves parents in decisions regarding areas of focus, expenditures of funds and allocation of resources.
Ongoing	LEA submits application for program improvement funds if desired.

IV

ASSISTANCE TO BE PROVIDED BY SEA

If after one year of full implementation, students continue to show no improvement, the LEAs and the SEA shall develop and implement a joint Program Improvement Plan.

1. Review of Data

Office of Public Instruction (OPI) Chapter 1 staff shall review the data submitted by the LEA. The SEA will identify, by September 30, schools which have not shown substantial progress for school improvement after one school year of implementation of a school improvement plan. The Chapter 1 specialist assigned to the school shall review the school improvement plan in order to assist as needed. Involvement by the specialist will be determined by the degree of need, extent of program revisions, resources available and length of time in the School Improvement Plan process.

2. Planning

The SEA recognizes that Chapter 1 school improvement can only occur in a larger context. The total school community should be involved in the change and improvement. Therefore, we strongly encourage schools to examine the total instructional program when attempting to improve instruction of Chapter 1 students. The joint Program Improvement Plan will be developed cooperatively by the LEA and SEA and implemented according to the timeline in this plan. Modifications will be agreed upon by the SEA, the LEA and local site. The degree of revision shall be based on an assessment of the original plan and extent the plan has been implemented.

3. Program Improvement Technical Assistance Meetings

The SEA Chapter 1 staff shall review plans and data submitted by LEAs in order to identify and group schools with similar characteristics and needs. Districts will be notified of sites and dates for program improvement meetings. The meetings shall be attended by school teams composed of a minimum of two members, the building principal and a Chapter 1 educator. SEAs are strongly encouraged to include a parent of an eligible Chapter 1 student.

The SEA shall formulate a series of workshops on school improvement including, but not limited to, the following topics:

a. Self-assessment
b. Evaluation
c. Parental involvement
d. Teacher coordination
e. Instructional techniques
f. Curriculum design
g. Effective school practices
h. Delivery systems and procedures

4. Program Improvement Funds

In any year in which program improvement funds authorized under Section 1405 of Chapter 1 of the Act are available, LEAs with schools identified as being in need of program improvement may apply to the OPI for program improvement assistance funds. Applications for such funds will be approved by the OPI if the proposed expenditures meet the requirements of Section 1405(b)(2) and (3) of the Act.

If funds are not appropriated under Section 1405 of the Act, the SEA shall, at a minimum, provide the following services:

With the least possible paperwork and burden, follow the progress of any school identified by an LEA under Section 200.38(b)(1);

Develop and implement with LEAs joint plans for program improvement;

Ensure that program improvement assistance is provided to each school identified;

Conduct other program improvement activities to the extent practicable; and

Offer program improvement sessions during the Chapter 1 Conference.

5. Evaluation of Program Improvement Plans

The SEA Chapter 1 staff shall review evaluation results to determine the effectiveness of the joint Program Improvement Plans. The LEA and SEA will continue to revise the joint plan until aggregate performance and desired outcomes show substantial progress and are sustained over a period greater than 12 months.

V

THE PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PROCESS:

DEVELOPING A YEAR 1 PIP

1. **Who should be involved in developing a school's Year 1 Program Improvement Plan (PIP)?**

The regulations specify that the LEA and identified school shall coordinate in the development of the PIP. The SEA suggests using a team approach to planning.

2. **Who would be involved on a planning team?**

A PIP team may include 4-7 members, including the building administrator(s), classroom teacher(s), school Chapter 1 staff, parent(s) of Chapter 1 student(s) and LEA Chapter 1 staff. The specific composition of the PIP team could vary depending upon the LEA and school involved.

3. **Must the PIP cover all content areas included in the Chapter 1 program?**

No. The PIP addresses only the specific content area(s) which failed to meet the program improvement criteria (i.e., a positive aggregated NCE gain, or beginning with the 1989-90 evaluations, making substantial progress toward desired outcomes).

4. **What must be included in a PIP?**

Each PIP must include four components:

a. How the LEA assessed the changes needed in the school's Chapter 1 program;

b. How the changes which have the greatest likelihood of improving the performance of Chapter 1 children were identified;

c. How these changes will be used to modify the current program; and

d. What technical assistance is required in order to implement this PIP successfully.

5. **What specific information must be stated about the changes planned?**

a. The educational strategies designed to achieve the desired outcomes and improve aggregate achievement of Chapter 1 students;

b. The resources to be used to implement those strategies; and

c. How those resources will be applied to carry out the identified strategies.

6. **What resources may be included on a PIP?**

Any number of resources might be applied to help improve a Chapter 1 program. These could include:

- qualified personnel;
- inservice training;
- curriculum materials;
- equipment;
- physical facilities;
- alternative curriculum that has shown promise in similar settings;
- improving coordination between the Chapter 1 program and the regular school program;
- evaluation of parental involvement;
- appropriate inservice training for Chapter 1 and other staff who teach participating students; and/or
- other appropriate measures selected by the LEA.

7. **What format must be used to develop a PIP?**

No specific format is required for a PIP. However, the SEA has provided a complete PIP planning package to LEAs involved in program improvement. This package includes sample formats for a PIP.

8. **What technical assistance may be provided as part of the PIP?**

Technical assistance is defined as positive input from a person and/or written resources which provides valid information useful to a school in the improvement of its Chapter 1 program. A wide range of possibilities might fit this definition.

9. **How can a school obtain specific information about Chapter 1 technical assistance resources?**

The SEA will develop and maintain a list of Chapter 1 technical assistance resource persons. This list will include people qualified to address:

- training and retraining personnel;
- developing curricula proven successful in other schools;
- replicating promising practices from research and effective schools;
- improving coordination between Chapter 1 and the regular school program; and/or
- developing innovative strategies to enhance parental involvement.

10. **Are there any extra funds available to assist schools with program improvement?**

Congress has appropriated funds through Section 1405 of Public Law 100-297 (program improvement funds), so some additional money is available. LEAs involved in program improvement will be notified about how to apply to the SEA for these technical assistance funds.

VI

PROCESS FOR ASSESSING INDIVIDUAL STUDENT PROGRESS

- Collect individual student data including scores on norm-referenced tests (for grades 2-12) and desired outcome results (all grades).

END OF YEAR ONE

- Identify those students not showing progress based on norm-referenced test results or who have not shown substantial progress toward meeting the desired outcomes stated in the LEA's application.

- Conduct an analysis of students' needs to identify areas of the educational program in need of improvement.

- Consider modifications in the Chapter 1 project to better serve those students identified as not showing progress.

END OF YEAR TWO

- Identify those students in each building, who, for two years in a row, do not show substantial progress toward meeting the desired outcomes stated in the LEA's application or whose achievement on norm-referenced tests shows no improvement or a decline.

- Determine individual student needs based on a thorough diagnostic assessment of students identified.

- Modify the project, as necessary, to meet each student's needs.